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ABSTRACT

Sixty-three randomly selected department heads at colleges and universities in 36 states responded to two composite questions concerning the use of student evaluations by their departments. Resulting data indicated that nearly 90 percent of the college and university speech departments surveyed utilize student evaluations, approximately 87 percent of the chairmen personally direct student evaluation of courses and faculty, about 75 percent of the chairmen administer student evaluations during each term, and nearly 96 percent of the responding chairmen utilize the evaluation results. The report includes the University of Dayton Teacher and Course Evaluation Questionnaire developed by the Department of Communication Arts at the University of Dayton and administered first in April 1971. (EE)

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"Student Evaluation of College and University Speech-Communication Courses and Faculty: A Survey and the University of Dayton Evaluation Instrument"

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During the past fifty years, an impressive array of diversified research relating to student evaluation of college/university courses and faculty has been published. As early as 1927, the Purdue University Rating Scale for Instructors was developed;[1] subsequently, student evaluation instruments administered at Miami University, Indiana University, the University of Illinois, and other institutions of higher education appeared in print.[2]

The Costain et al study contains 119 bibliographic listings of student-evaluation research publications.[3] This listing details the reliability, validity, and the usefulness of the college/university students evaluating both courses and faculty. Two of the listed studies relate respectively to the evaluation of engineering instructors and psychology instructors.[4] While the Costain et al study represents an intensive, selective literature search extending back as far as 1927 and as current as 1971, no listed research pertains to student evaluation of college/university speech-communication courses and/or faculty.

The peruser of the most recently published research can find no answer to the question: To what extent are college/university speech department chairmen utilizing student evaluation of speech-communication courses and faculty? The purpose of this study is twofold: (1) to survey the extent that speech department chairmen are utilizing student evaluation of speech-communication courses and faculty, and (2) to expose the student evaluation instrument developed by the Department of Communication Arts faculty at the University of Dayton in Ohio.

Student Evaluation Survey

Method

One hundred double postcards were mailed to randomly selected college and university speech department heads; sixty-three department heads (63% return), representing thirty-six states, responded to two composite questions.

Question #1: Is your department presently using student evaluation of courses and/or faculty. If "yes," is the evaluation of courses, faculty, or both.

Response: As noted in Table 1, approximately ninety per cent of the responding speech department heads administer student evaluation in their respective departments while an approximate ten per cent of the responding department heads, currently, are not administering student evaluation.

TABLE 1

USE OF STUDENT EVALUATION IN COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY SPEECH DEPARTMENTS

Dept. Heads Using Student Evaluation	Dept. Heads Not Using Student Evaluation	Future Plans of Non-Users
57	6	5 yes
(90.5%)	(9.5%)	1 no
N: 63		

A large majority (87.7%) of speech department heads utilize student evaluation for both courses and faculty, as shown in

Table 2. Only three department heads (5.3%) direct student evaluation for courses but not faculty; only four department heads (7.0%) direct student evaluation for faculty but not courses.

TABLE 2

KIND OF STUDENT EVALUATION ADMINISTERED IN COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY SPEECH DEPARTMENTS

Courses	Faculty	Courses and Faculty
3 (5.3%)	4 (7.0%)	50 (87.7%)
N: 57		

Question #2: If you are using student evaluation in your department, is it applied each term, once a year, or less often?

Response: Nearly three-fourths of the department heads administering student evaluation in their departments apply this evaluation at the end of each term or semester; nearly one-fourth of the department heads apply student evaluation once a year, as shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3

FREQUENCY OF STUDENT EVALUATION APPLIED IN COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY SPEECH DEPARTMENTS

Each Term	Each Year	Less Often
41 (71.9%)	13 (22.8%)	3 (5.3%)
N: 57		

Conclusions

This student evaluation survey clearly supports the following conclusions:

1. Student evaluation of speech-communication courses and/or faculty is considered a meaningful administrative tool by approximately ninety per cent of the responding college and university speech department heads.

2. Nearly ten per cent of the respondents, currently, are not utilizing student evaluation; however, five of the six negative respondents intend to administer student evaluation in the near future.

3. A large majority (87.7%) of the responding speech department heads apply student evaluation to both courses and faculty; the remaining respondents (12.3%) are nearly equally divided in the application of student evaluation of courses only or of faculty only. (Due to the limited space of the double postcard questionnaire, the data did not indicate whether all or only segments of each department's courses and/or faculty were subjected to student evaluation.)

4. Nearly three-fourths (71.9%) of the responding speech department heads administer student evaluation for speech-communication courses and/or faculty during each term while nearly one-fourth (22.7%) of the respondents administer student evaluation during each year. (Again, due to the limited space of the postcard questionnaire, no data was obtained relating to the specific weeks of each term or

each year in which student evaluations are applied.)

5. Obviously, student evaluation is of timely interest to speech department heads since nearly ninety-six per cent of all respondents requested the finalized data from this research.

University of Dayton Student Evaluation Instrument

The University of Dayton Teacher and Course Evaluation Questionnaire was administered, for the first time, in April, 1972, as a departmental procedure. A total of fifty-four fundamental, advanced, and graduate speech-communication courses and, also, nineteen faculty members were evaluated. Each evaluation required approximately twenty-three minutes of class time.

Procedure

1. The evaluation was administered within a specific period of time, beginning Wednesday, April 5, and ending Thursday, April 11. All faculty had been notified of their evaluation schedules three weeks prior to April 5.

2. The faculty cooperated by relinquishing their classes promptly as scheduled. Frequently, the moderators administered two evaluations within a seventy-five minute class period.

3. Approximately, eight hundred students participated in this departmental evaluation; these students were not

informed of the impending evaluation prior to the assigned evaluation time.

4. Preceding the evaluation, the faculty evaluation moderators related to uniform instructions containing: (1) an introduction of the moderator, (2) the purpose of the evaluation, (3) a brief explanation of the Teacher and Course Evaluation Questionnaire, (4) an appeal for students to respond frankly and sincerely, and finally, (5) the reassurance that each student's identity was safeguarded and that faculty would not receive the results of the evaluation until two weeks after the termination of the current Spring Term.
5. As each evaluation was completed, the moderator requested a student to place the IBM cards and the open-end question sheets in an envelope. The sealed envelope was immediately delivered to the Department Chairman.
6. Two weeks following the termination of the Spring Term, each faculty member, on an appointment basis, has the opportunity: (1) to study the computerized results of each questionnaire item, (2) to study the composite results of each course, and (3) to examine the students' responses to the three open-end questions.

The basic structure of the student evaluation instrument, attached to this paper, includes: (1) demographic data, (2) general instructions, (3) characteristics of the teacher and the teaching,

(4) characteristics of the course, and (5) the open-end question sheet.

Since the first "blanket" student evaluation of Communication Arts faculty and courses in April of 1972, this instrument has been applied, intermittently, as needed: (1) to assist in evaluating teaching proficiency of newly hired faculty; (2) to reenforce a faculty member's bid for rank promotion; and (3) to assess student attitude toward new course offerings.

The second "blanket" student evaluation has been scheduled for December of 1973; this evaluation will involve fifty-four fundamental, advanced, and graduate courses, and, also, seventeen faculty members. Two faculty evaluation coordinators and three faculty evaluation assistants will administer the "blanket" evaluation within a five-day period (November 28, 29, 30, December 3, and 4). The faculty was notified of the five-day impending evaluation one month in advance; all faculty received their student evaluation class schedules three weeks in advance.

Generally, this instrument, designed specifically to evaluate speech-communication teachers and courses, continues to be favorably received by the Communication Arts faculty and students (majors and non-majors) at the University of Dayton.

TEACHER AND COURSE EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Department of Communication Arts

University of Dayton

DIRECTIONS: Your answers to the items in this test are to be recorded on the separate IBM ANSWER CARD which you have received. On the IBM answer card, you will find rows of bracketed spaces numbered for each item and numbered to correspond to the suggested answers. To respond to an item, select the one answer which you think is the most appropriate and mark the corresponding bracket space on the answer card with a test pencil. Do not make any marks on the questionnaire itself except for completing the separate page with the open-end questions.

IF A QUESTION DOES NOT APPLY, PLEASE LEAVE IT BLANK!

---

1. Would you recommend this course to another student?

   A. Yes B. No

2. Student:

   Year: A. 1st B. 2nd C. 3rd D. 4th E. Other

3. Are you a Communication Arts major?

   A. Yes B. No

4. School:

   A. Arts and Sciences B. Education C. Business

   D. Engineering E. Technical Institute

5. Expected grade in this course:

   A B C D E (f)

Characteristics of the Teacher and the Teaching

6. The instructor was well prepared for class.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neutral	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

7. The instructor appeared sensitive to the students' feelings and problem

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neutral	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

8. He encouraged students to ask questions freely, to disagree, to express their ideas, etc.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neutral	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

9. He was fair and constructive in his dealings with the students.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neutral	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

His speech exemplified effective and proper speaking techniques.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neutral	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

11. The instructor rarely dwelled on the obvious.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neutral	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

12. The instructor displayed a genuine interest in the subject.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neutral	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

13. His presentation of ideas was logical, coherent, and well-organized.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neutral	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

14. He stimulated thinking.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neutral	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

15. When appropriate, corrected assignments were returned within a reasonable period of time.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neutral	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

16. The instructor made meaningful written and/or verbal comments on each student's work.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neutral	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

17. He was actively helpful when students had difficulty.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neutral	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

18. He demonstrated an expertise in the subject matter.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neutral	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

19. He presented course material in an interesting and effective manner.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neutral	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

20. The atmosphere of the class was enjoyable.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neutral	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

21. The instructor's teaching techniques were most appropriate for optimum learning by the student.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neutral	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

22. I was eager to attend class.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neutral	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

23. Considering everything, how would you rate this teacher?

Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
A	B	C	D	E

Characteristics of the Course

24. The course content was challenging to the students

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neutral	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

25. The objectives of the course were clear enough to serve as aids to student learning.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neutral	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

26. The amount of work required was appropriate for the amount of learning experiences.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neutral	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

27. The tests in this course seemed to be a valid measure of what the students had learned.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neutral	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

28. The grading criteria were explained adequately.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neutral	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

29. The required textbook was an asset to the total learning experience.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neutral	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

30. As a result of this course, I probably will pursue the subject matter further.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neutral	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

31. The instructor scheduled and maintained an adequate number of office hours.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neutral	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

32. The course assignments were valuable to the total learning experience.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neutral	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

33. Adequate class time was allotted for student performance.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neutral	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

34. Supplementary materials used, such as bibliographies, handouts, visual aids, etc., enriched the course.

Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neutral	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

35. How would you rate this course?

Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
A	B	C	D	E

DIRECTIONS: To answer the following questions, do not make any markings on the computer card. Instead, please write on the questionnaire sheet in the designated space for each question.

Professor: _____
name

Course Title: _____

Number: _____

Time: _____
hour day

1. Please comment briefly on the following:

   a. Did the instructor motivate you to learn? Why? Why not?

   b. Did the instructor exhibit any undesirable mannerisms? What were they?

2. If you have any additional comments to make about the course, please relate them here.

Footnotes

[1]G. C. Brandenburg and H. H. Remmers, "The Purdue Rating Scale for Instructors," Educational Administration and Supervision, 13 (1927), 399-406.

[2]See A. W. Bendig, "A Statistical Report on a Revision of the Miami Instructor Rating Sheet," Journal of Educational Psychology, 43 (1952), 423-429; also, H. H. Remers and D. N. Elliott, "The Indiana College and University Staff-Evaluation Program," School and Society, 70 (1949), 168-171.

[3]Frank Costain et al., "Student Ratings of College Teaching: Reliability, Validity, and Usefulness," Review of Educational Research, 41 (1971), 511-535.

[4]See A. S. Deshpande, S. C. Webb, and E. Marks, "Student Perceptions of Engineering Instructor Behaviors and Their Relationships to the Evaluation of Instructors and Courses," American Educational Research Journal, 7 (1970), 289-305; also, A. W. Bendig, "Ability and Personality Characteristics of Introductory Psychology Instructors Rated Competent and Empathetic by the Students," Journal of Educational Research, 48 (1955), 705-709.

[5]For assisting in this research, this writer gives due recognition to George C. Biersack, Chairman, and Philip J. Harwood, Assistant Professor, Department of Communication Arts, University of Dayton, and, also, to James T. Tiedge, Assistant Professor in the School of Speech at Marquette University.